

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

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State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Unemployment rates decline as jobs increase in October

Unemployment rates declined in nearly every county of the West Central region in October including the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan statistical area (MSA). The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the MSA dropped for the second straight month and is now half a percentage point below the rate of one year ago.

The October seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the Eau Claire MSA was 4.5 percent; down from 4.8 percent in September and from 5.0 percent last October. That indicates greater improvement locally than in the state or nation where unemployment rates are still higher than one year ago although the state rate did decline over the month. The MSA unemployment rate is lower than both the state and national rates of 4.9 and 5.7 percent, respectively, and has been since August.

A gloomier comparison, however, is to every October since 1994 with lower unemployment rates for the metro area. The higher unemployment rate this October does not reflect the enormous gain in employment since 1994. The total number of residents with jobs in October was 80,800 out of a total labor force of 84,600. There are currently more residents with jobs than in any previous October.

Robust employment is not unusual in October and typically results in the lowest unemployment rate of the year. The reason is that in October jobs with construction projects are still in full swing, jobs with school systems increase as workers return from

summer break, and student workers return to jobs in retail trade and services as they also generate more demand for services.

In October, employment in the metro area increased by 200 while the number of unemployed declined by 280, seasonally adjusted. Not adjusted the number of employed residents increased by 900 and the number of unemployed declined by 100.

The unadjusted numbers reflect the many jobs that resume with school systems every September and October. The number of jobs with government employers increased 680 in October, slightly better than typical. The increase of 220 services industry jobs was also slightly better than normal. Many of those extra jobs are not only filled by returning students, but are created to fill the needs of returning

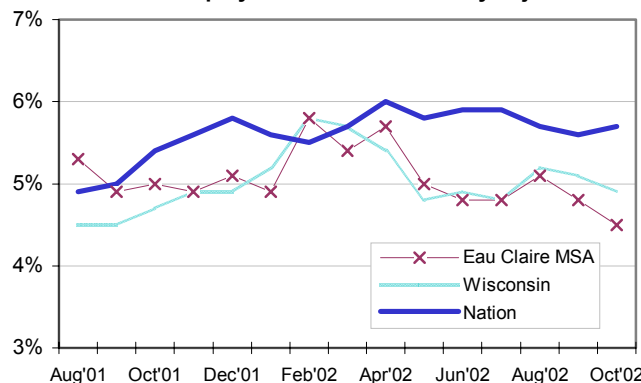
students. Good examples are the cafeteria and maintenance jobs in dormitories. Retail trade jobs, especially in restaurants, also increase with the return of students. This year, however, the increase in retail trade jobs was less than normal.

Students also generated jobs in Dunn and Pierce counties, the only other areas in the West Central region where the total number of jobs with industries increased in October. In spite of the lack

of new jobs, total employment in all of the counties was slightly higher in October. This resulted in lower unemployment rates in all but Barron and Clark counties.

In Barron County the unemployment rate in Oc-

Unemployment Rates-Seasonally adjusted



	Aug'01	Sep'01	Oct'01	Aug'02	Sep'02	Oct'02
Eau Claire MSA	5.3%	4.9%	5.0%	5.1%	4.8%	4.5%
Wisconsin	4.5%	4.5%	4.7%	5.2%	5.1%	4.9%
Nation	4.9%	5.0%	5.4%	5.7%	5.6%	5.7%

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tober was unchanged from the September rate of 4.0 percent while in Clark County the rate increased from 4.1 to 4.2 percent. The remaining counties in West Central Wisconsin were among the 40 counties in the state where unemployment rates declined over the month. The greatest reduction in the state occurred in St. Croix County where the unemployment rate dropped from 5.4 percent in September to 4.8 percent in October. However, the rate remains a full percentage point higher than one year ago.

Manufacturing jobs in both Barron and St. Croix are well below the level of last year although job opportunities continue to increase in other industries, as is the case in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metro.

Dunn County is the only area with an increase in production jobs in the last year and, with the official announcement by Ford pending, is likely to sustain that level through 2003. The 2.8 percent unemployment rate in Dunn County is the lowest in the region and sixth lowest in the state.

October 2002 Estimates										
Not seasonally adjusted	Wisconsin	EC MSA	Barron	Clark	Dunn	Pepin	Pierce	Polk	St.Croix	
Civilian Labor Force*	3,054,200	84,900	24,300	16,100	23,400	3,200	21,400	23,800	35,200	
Employed	2,928,200	81,900	23,300	15,400	22,700	3,100	20,600	22,800	33,500	
Unemployed	126,000	3,000	1,000	700	700	100	800	1,000	1,700	
Unemployment rate(%)	4.1%	3.6%	4.0%	4.2%	2.8%	3.4%	3.7%	4.2%	0.0%	
Total jobs, all industries**	2,868,300	77,900	21,700	10,000	16,400	2,200	11,200	15,500	28,100	
Construction & Mining	134,040	4,260	900	690	740	170	470	850	1,750	
Manufacturing	570,600	11,140	6,470	3,060	2,370	150	1,330	4,600	6,790	
Transportation & Public Util.	133,040	3,360	750	460	550	100	520	480	1,120	
Wholesale Trade	136,540	3,260	580	510	650	250	200	370	700	
Retail Trade	511,320	17,410	4,150	1,290	4,240	470	2,420	2,720	6,360	
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	153,820	2,940	410	230	440	70	330	480	1,050	
Services	803,980	22,700	3,860	1,710	2,880	410	2,190	3,230	6,560	
Government	424,990	12,840	4,610	2,040	4,580	550	3,770	2,740	3,770	
Change from previous month										
Civilian Labor Force*	4,900	900	0	200	1,600	100	100	0	0	
Employed	9,700	900	100	200	1,600	100	100	0	200	
Unemployed	-4,700	-100	0	0	0	0	0	0	-200	
Unemployment rate(%)	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.6%	
Total jobs, all industries**	14,100	900	-100	0	1,200	0	300	0	-400	
Construction & Mining	-1,600	-100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Manufacturing	-2,240	-120	-210	10	10	0	0	40	-380	
Transportation & Public Util.	780	20	20	-10	10	0	10	-10	30	
Wholesale Trade	-120	-90	0	0	10	0	-10	-10	20	
Retail Trade	2,960	260	10	0	80	-10	0	-60	-30	
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	120	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	
Services	-3,990	220	-70	0	20	0	-50	-20	-200	
Government	18,140	680	150	0	1,050	50	400	40	70	
Change from one year ago										
Civilian Labor Force*	61,200	1,300	500	300	1,000	0	300	800	700	
Employed	57,400	1,600	400	400	1,000	100	200	800	300	
Unemployed	3,800	-200	100	-100	0	0	100	100	400	
Unemployment rate(%)	0.0%	-0.4%	0.2%	-0.4%	-0.2%	-0.3%	0.5%	0.1%	1.0%	
Total jobs, all industries**	21,900	400	-100	-100	500	0	0	300	800	
Construction & Mining	1,500	400	-100	100	0	0	0	0	200	
Manufacturing	-9,370	-760	-150	-10	60	-10	-10	-60	-320	
Transportation & Public Util.	-1,290	-60	20	20	0	0	0	10	0	
Wholesale Trade	-1,570	100	10	-30	0	0	-20	0	60	
Retail Trade	3,650	-150	-90	0	60	-10	20	60	430	
Finance,Insurance,Real Estate	2,980	120	-20	0	20	0	10	20	100	
Services	25,380	440	90	0	90	10	-20	80	180	
Government	620	310	130	-110	260	0	-20	150	130	

* Includes participants residing in area. ** Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

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